

Message Text

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51

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 SAJ-01 CIAE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 OMB-01 /060 W

----- 044154

P R 031405Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1904

INFO DIA WASHDC

USMISSION USNATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 9597

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, IT

SUBJECT: CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY MAJORITY REBUFFS

FANFANI; EARLY POLICY DEBATE SCHEDULED

REF: ROME 9472

SUMMARY: CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC (DC) DIRECTORATE MEETING CONCLUDED JULY 2 WITH AGREEMENT TO LEAVE MORO GOVERNMENT IN PLACE FOR TIME BEING. NATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING CALLED FOR JULY 19 AT WHICH MAJOR POLICY DEBATE WILL BEGIN, AND FANFANI'S FATE MAY BE DETERMINED. FAILURE EVEN TO MENTION DC CONGRESS CONFIRMED THAT PARTY SECRETARY FANFANI HAS LOST HIS MAJORITY IN THE PARTY WITH DEFECTION OF CENTRIST FACTIONS. CENTER AGREED WITH THE LEFT WING IN OPPOSING POSTPONEMENT OF POLICY DEBATE AND LEADERSHIP CHANGES UNTIL A CONGRESS IN THE FALL AS FANFANI HAD PROPOSED. END SUMMARY.

1. THREE-DAY CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC (DC) MEETING CONCLUDED WITH APPROVAL OF A SHORT DOCUMENT WHICH REFLECTS DECISION TO LEAVE THE MORO GOVERNMENT IN PLACE FOR MOMENT AND CALLS ON MORO TO SEEK FIND POINTS OF AGREEMENT AMONG THE CENTER-LEFT PARTIES FOR AN URGENT PROGRAM TO BE CARRIED OUT BY HIS GOVERNMENT. THE DOCUMENT REAFFIRMED DC
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POLICIES OF CLOSURE TO THE "NEO-FASCIST RIGHT" AND "CON-

CEPTUAL AND POLITICAL OPPOSITION" TO THE COMMUNISTS. ALSO REAFFIRMED WAS THE POLICY TO FAVOR THE FORMATION OF CENTER-LEFT ADMINISTRATIONS WHEREEVER POSSIBLE ON THE LOCAL LEVEL. FINALLY, PARTY SECRETARY FANFANI "WAS INVITED" TO REPORT ON THE POLITICAL AND PARTY SITUATIONS AT A DC NATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING CONVOKED FOR JULY 19. NO MENTION WAS MADE OF A DC CONGRESS WHICH FANFANI HAD PROPOSED AS THE PROPER FORUM FOR DEBATE ON POLICY AND LEADERSHIP CHANGES.

2. FOLLOWING A PERIOD OF HECTIC CONSULTATIONS WITHIN AND AMONG DC PARTY FACTIONS, THE PICCOLI-RUMOR GROUP (REPRESENTING ROUGHLY ONE-THIRD OF PARTY) AND THE ANDREOTTI-COLOMBO FACTION (1 PERCENT OF PARTY) OPENLY REBUFFED PARTY SECRETARY FANFANI'S CONGRESS PROPOSAL WHICH WOULD HAVE DEFERRED THE CRUCIAL DEBATE UNTIL THE FALL. LEADING SPOKESMEN FOR BOTH FACTIONS IN SPEECHES TO THE DIRECTORATE CALLED FOR SPEEDY CONVOCAION OF A NATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING TO DEBATE THE MAJOR ISSUES FACING THE PARTY. THEY ALSO EMPHASIZED THEIR OPPOSITION TO ANY ACTION THAT WOULD CUT THE TWO-PARTY LEFT-WING FACTIONS OUT OF THIS POLICY DEBATE AT A TIME WHEN THE PARTY NEEDS TO REINFORCE ITS TIES WITH YOUTH AND UNIONIZED WORKERS (WHERE THE PARTY LEFT HAS TRADITIONALLY HAD ITS SUPPORT). THIS NEW ACCORD AMONG PICCOLI-RUMOR-COLOMBO-ANDREOTTI IS ALREADY BEING DUBBED THE "PACT OF PIAZZA NAVONA" AFTER A MEETING HELD IN COLOMBO'S OFFICE DURING A BREAK IN THE DIRECTORATE DISCUSSIONS.

3. EMBASSY SOURCES REPORT THAT FANI DECIDED NOT RPT NOT TO PUT HIS CONGRESS PROPOSAL TO A VOTE IN ORDER TO AVOID FORMALIZING THE BREAK IN MAJORITY RANKS AT THIS TIME. PRIME MINISTER MORO, WHO SO FAR HAS REFUSED TO JOIN THE BLOC OPPOSING FANFANI, MEDIATED TO AVOID A SHOWDOWN AT THE DIRECTORATE MEETING.

4. ALTHOUGH DISAGREEING WITH FANFANI ON THE TIMING OF A POLICY DEBATE WITHIN THE PARTY, HIS OPPONENTS WITHIN THE CENTRIST FACTIONS (WITH NOTABLE EXCEPTION OF BISAGLIA SUPPORTED HIS VIEW THAT THE MORO GOVERNMENT

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SHOULD REMAIN IN PLACE UNTIL THE FALL.

5. COMMENT: NET RESULT OF DIRECTORATE MEETING IS TO SERIOUSLY WEAKEN FANFANI'S POSITION AND TO MOVE UP THE STARTING DATE OF THE NECESSARY POLICY DEBATE WITHIN THE PARTY FOLLOWING THE DRAMATIC JUNE 15 COMMUNIST ELECTION GAINS. THIS DEBATE, WHICH MAY HAVE TO BE CONTINUED AT A CONGRESS IN THE FALL, WILL DEAL WITH TOUGH ISSUES

INCLUDING LEADERSHIP RENEWAL, PROGRAM CHANGES, AND THE
FUTURE OF DC-COMMUNIST PARTY RELATIONS AT THE LOCAL AND
NATIONAL LEVELS. UPON ITS OUTCOME WILL LARGELY DEPEND
THE SURVIVAL OF THE DC AS THE GUARANTOR OF DEMOCRATIC
GOVERNMENT IN ITALY AND THE COUNTRY'S LARGEST PARTY.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL PARTIES, PERSONNEL RESIGNATIONS, PARTY FACTIONS, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 JUL 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975ROME09597
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750231-0119
From: ROME
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750787/aaaadaas.tel
Line Count: 121
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 ROME 9472
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 30 APR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <30 APR 2003 by MartinML>; APPROVED <16 OCT 2003 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY MAJORITY REBUFFS FANFANI; EARLY POLICY DEBATE SCHEDULED
TAGS: PINT, IT
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006